

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 1, 2003 (PC Mtg. 10/8/03)

TO: York County Planning Commission

FROM: Amy M. Parker, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Application No. UP-624-03, Home Depot USA, Inc.

ISSUE

This application requests a Special Use Permit, pursuant to Sections 24.1-306 (Category 10, No. 6) and 24.1-466(g) of the York County Zoning Ordinance, to authorize a home improvement center of more than 80,000 gross square feet on an 18.3-acre portion of a 27.6-acre parcel located at 6700 Mooretown Road (Route 603) and further identified as Assessor's Parcel No. 2-32. The property is located on the east side of Mooretown Road, approximately 500 feet south of its intersection with East Rochambeau Drive (Route F137).

DESCRIPTION

- Property Owner: Bulifants, L.P.
- Location: 6700 Mooretown Road (Route 603)
- Area: Approximately 18.3 acres of a 27.6-acre parcel
- Frontage: Approximately 40 feet on Mooretown Road
- Utilities: The property is currently served by public water and sewer
- Topography: Varied
- 2015 Land Use Map Designation: Economic Opportunity
- Zoning Classification: EO – Economic Opportunity
WMP – Watershed Management and Protection overlay
- Existing Development: Vacant
- Surrounding Development:

North: Regional storm water management pond; Lowe's & Wal-Mart beyond
East: Vacant
South: Vacant
West: Williamsburg Community Hospital (under construction) across Mooretown Road

- Proposed Development: 132,873 square-foot home improvement center

CONSIDERATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

1. The applicant proposes to subdivide a parcel of approximately 17.9 acres from the 27.6-acre subject parcel to construct the proposed home improvement center. The total area subject to the Special Use Permit (SUP) includes an additional 0.4 acres (18.3 acres total) containing a joint access area to be shared with future users of an adjacent 5.82-acre residual parcel located to the south of the site. A second 3.7-acre residual parcel is shown adjacent to the western end of the site and fronting on Mooretown Road. Frontage on Mooretown Road for the SUP parcel would be limited to the joint access area at the southwest corner of the parcel and a small area outlined for a monument sign at the northwest corner of the site. The 27.6-acre parcel is subject to a 35-foot landscape buffer along Mooretown Road pursuant to a condition voluntarily proffered by the property owner as part of Application No. ZM-38-98, which was approved through the adoption of Ordinance No. 095-27 (attached).
2. The Comprehensive Plan designates this area for Economic Opportunity, and the property is zoned EO (Economic Opportunity). This designation is intended to promote a mix of commercial, tourist-related and limited industrial uses, and emphasis is placed on capital- and labor-intensive uses. Current uses in the area of the subject site include Williamsburg Community Hospital, Lowe's, Wal-Mart and a Sonic drive-through restaurant. Surrounding zoning includes EO to the north, south and west and RR (Rural Residential) to the east. The property is subject to the WMP (Watershed Management and Protection Area) overlay district. The property's eastern boundary borders Queen Creek, which is a tributary stream draining directly into Waller Mill Reservoir.
3. Quality architectural and landscape design is emphasized in the Comprehensive Plan Sub-area Description for this area of the County as well as in the Economic Opportunity Land Use Designation section. Architectural renderings of the building illustrate façade materials of pre-cast brick panels with beige trim, orange canopies and gables for the entrances and garden center and orange lettering for signage. Proposed signage includes a 417 square-foot façade sign on the front of the building and a 49 square-foot freestanding sign mounted on a 15-foot high monument base. The brick base of the monument sign would match the building façade.

Under Section 24.1-244(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, a 10-foot landscaped open space strip is required around the perimeter of all buildings. Given the nature of the proposed use, plantings surrounding the building would be impractical. The applicant is therefore proposing to transfer the equivalent landscape area to the west and north sides of the site. In order to facilitate screening of the parking lot, staff is recommending evergreen trees and shrubs be installed along the western perimeter of the site and a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs along the side yards. A proposed approval condition addresses this concern. In addition to minimum required landscaping for the parking lot and side yards, the applicant is proposing an additional landscaped area across the rear of the site.

4. Water quality and storm water runoff are of substantial concern in this area. Under the WMP overlay district provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, the eastern end of the property is subject to a 200-foot stream buffer bordering Queen Creek. Staff recommends there be no reduction of this buffer, and an approval condition addresses this issue. A regional storm water pond has been constructed on the property abutting the northern end of the site, and runoff from the site would be directed through this facility. The pond was designed to accommodate runoff from the applicant's site as well as the 3.7-acre residual parcel, given a maximum overall impervious surface of 85%. Based on information supplied by the applicant, the applicant's portion of the drainage area contributing to the facility would be approximately 90% impervious. In order to maintain the 85% impervious surface limit for the overall drainage area, development of the 3.7-acre residual parcel would be restricted to an impervious surface limit of approximately 71%.
5. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation manual (6th Edition), the proposed Home Depot store can be expected to generate approximately 4,660 vehicle trips per weekday, including 196 trips in the AM peak hour and 382 in the PM peak hour. Traffic impacts would be greater on Saturday; with an estimated 6,074 trips per day; no reliable trip generation data exists for estimating Sunday trips. The proposed entrance to the Home Depot store would form a four-way intersection with Mooretown Road and the entrance to the Williamsburg Community Hospital site directly opposite. According to the traffic impact analysis submitted by the applicant, the traffic generated by the Home Depot would not be sufficient to warrant a traffic signal in this location; however, when combined with the additional traffic generated by the proposed out-parcels, a signal may indeed be warranted. Regardless, with or without the Home Depot, it is likely that a signal will be required around 2007 with the completion of Phase 2 of the hospital (according to the traffic impact analysis that was submitted with the hospital site plan). The conceptual plan depicts a 150' right turn lane with a 150' taper along westbound Mooretown Road at the entrance to the site and a 200' left turn lane with a 200' taper along eastbound Mooretown Road. The plan also depicts a second right-in/right-out entrance to the west, which the developer has indicated would be constructed in conjunction with the development of the 3.7-acre out-parcel. However, because Mooretown Road is an

arterial road, the Home Depot development is not automatically entitled to a second entrance (pursuant to Section 24.1-252(b) of the Zoning Ordinance) and it is not part of this use permit application. Whether or not the proposed second entrance will be approved will be decided administratively during the subdivision/site plan review process for the 3.7-acre parcel after review of supplementary traffic impact analyses.

6. The northwest corner of the sketch plan indicates a subdivision design with a 20-foot wide “pipe stem” fronting on Mooretown Road configured for the purpose of installation of a monument sign. Staff does not recommend approval of such an irregular design when proposed solely for the purpose of sign installation. Section 20.5-70(b) of the Subdivision Ordinance addresses the issue of arrangement, design and shape of lots as follows: “The arrangement, design and shape shall relate to the natural topography and features of the land so that each lot has an acceptable building site with direct access from an improved street. Unusually shaped or elongated lots established primarily for the purpose of meeting minimum lot size requirements, when such area would be unusable for the usual purposes to which such area would normally be placed, shall not be permitted by the Agent.” Further, Section 24.1-202(c) of the Zoning Ordinance indicates that flag lots are generally to be considered an unacceptable design technique except in planned developments or open space subdivisions, for the prevention of undesirable access to collector or arterial roads, or where there exists “unique physical or environmental characteristics of a parent tract which preclude efficient and logical subdivision in accordance with normally applicable frontage requirements.” Staff has advised the applicant that the pipe stem arrangement could be proposed as a way to accommodate both driveway access and a sign. However, the applicant has chosen not to propose a second (northernmost) driveway as part of the application (and submitted traffic impact study). Additionally, encroachment into the proffered 35-foot landscape buffer for the sign should not be permitted when other alternatives exist to install the sign in conjunction with the entrance to the development. A proposed approval condition addresses this issue.
7. The Zoning Ordinance contains provisions for outdoor display of merchandise sold on-premises in the EO district provided that the area does not encroach upon parking spaces and landscaped areas. The applicant has indicated that areas along the face of the building and in front of the garden center would be used for display of merchandise. Additional permanent storage of materials would be accommodated in the 27,988 square-foot garden center located at the north end of the building. Permanent storage areas are required to be screened, and approval conditions address these issues.

RECOMMENDATION

The Route 199 and Mooretown Road corridors have been planned for a mix of retail, office, light industrial, and tourist-oriented development. The proposed home improvement center is compatible with existing large-scale retail and restaurant uses and the hospital located in the immediate vicinity. Therefore, based on the considerations outlined above, staff recommends that the Commission forward Application No. UP-624-03 to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval. This can be accomplished through the adoption of Resolution No. PC03-29.

Attachments:

- Zoning Map
- Conceptual Plan
- Building Elevation
- Sign Elevation
- Ordinance No. O98-27
- Proposed Resolution No. PC03-29

AMP